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EVERGREEN LIVE OAKS

BEST SHADE TREE FOR THE SOUTHWEST

JAN 13 1944
U. S. Department of Agriculture

Live Oak — The Shade Tree of The South

TREE AND MAN

By Edgar A. Guest

The oak tree never quits its place
To ask about a neighbor's care.
A thing of majesty and grace,
Whose leafy arms seem raised in prayer,
It stands two hundred years or more
Against the storms of winter stout,
While man is broken down before
The sands of seventy years run out.

From the first moment of its birth
Until a rotted log it dies,
Its roots draw sweetness from the earth,
Its leaves draw nectar from the skies.
Patient, untroubled and serene,
A tree, with age in splendor grows,
Because on it no grief has been
Such as the fretted mortal knows.

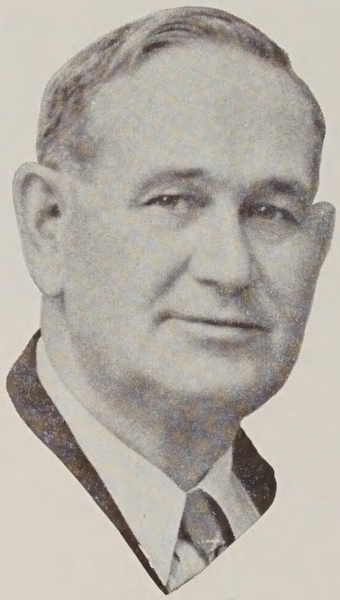
Poor man must roam the world afar
And give his strength to many needs;
Pride, pomp and place of pity are
Forever spurring him to deeds.
Not only must he suffer pain,
But God has fashioned him so fair
That none may cry to him in vain.
Even a stranger's hurt he'll share.

The span of mortal life is brief.
The oak tree long outlives us all,
Yet better 'tis to suffer grief;
To weary oft at duty's call;
To wear our strength and courage out
Against the tides of human fears
Than live and never ask about
The cause of sorrow's blinding tears.

Dedicated To
WALTER C. GRIFFING, Lover of Live Oaks.

GRIFFING NURSERIES

BEAUMONT, TEXAS



MR. GRIFFING'S SEARCH FOR LIVE OAKS

"Ever since I came to the Gulf Coast region of Texas from Florida, I have longed for a good Fast growing Evergreen Shade tree suitable for this country.

In searching and trying out every type and variety of shade tree, I found a type of Live Oak that was quite different from the native Texas Live Oak. This strain I first noticed on the West Coast of Florida, and secured a true strain of it and tested it out in the Nursery. The growth of the young seedlings was noticeably much faster than any of the native types I had tried to grow.

These few seedlings, we planted out in our experimental grounds and kept watch of them until we could actually see their progress of growth over the others. Then we arranged to get a large quantity of the acorns from the original Trees; and plant them in our propagating beds.

This was a number of years ago, and it is with considerable pride that we have finally found an Evergreen type of Shade Tree that grows off just as quickly as any other Type of Shade tree known to the Gulf Coast region. Experiments have been made to show that they grow as fast as the Arizona Ash, Chinese Elm, etc. and being a hardwood tree, live an ever-lasting life, whereas these other trees are short lived.

Having originated from the West Coast of Florida, and seemingly have come into the inland from Spain, as best we could ascertain, we designated this type of the improved Fast growing Live Oak tree, as the **Spanish Type of Live Oak.**

The natural tendency of the Tree is to grow uniform and straight in the Nursery row; but when the side branches are pruned for planting in the open lawn; it develops lateral branches and heavy branched top within the second years' growth."

W. C. GRIFFING

PLANTING LARGE TREES

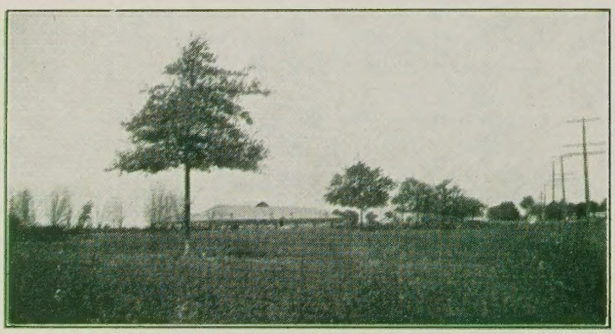
Up until just a few years ago, we all thought that we could only plant small Trees and wait for them to grow; but science and learning has done wonderful things even in the Nursery business.

Where the large trees have had regular cultivation in the Nursery, and root-pruned year after year, the root system is more compact and a large Tree can now be transplanted with as much success as a small tree. In fact, if anything it is easier to move than small trees and requires less special care and attention afterwards because it is more sturdy and withstands the transplanting better than a young tender tree.

SPECIAL PRUNING FOR TREES

There are lots of requests to top prune trees for low branching; and in years gone by we actually made this a practice. However, sooner or later we realize our mistakes; which was indeed a serious one to prune trees in this manner. We saw that the forks weakened the tops of a large tree, and resulted in split branches after wind-storms and diseased crotches and eventually loss of beautiful trees.

Therefore, early in the life of the trees in our Nursery fields, we begin training all trees with a main center stem reaching from the lower trunk to the tip-top of the tree. This does not allow for split branches, but uniform main stem all the way through the tree even after they are old, old specimens. The side branches all grow out from the main center trunk



These Trees were properly pruned—Notice how the top branches have developed by the second year.

The advantage of the proper training of trees in this manner, was noticed by the Landscape Architects and Engineers who made up plans and supervised plantings of Trees in Parks, along Streets and Highways; and now it is one of their requirements of all trees which are supplied.

When orders are filled for Live Oak Trees from our Nurseries, we always recommend that the pruning be left to our judgment and in this way we prune each tree according to the amount and manner it should be for developing a good well-rounded out tree for your planting.

A Newly Planted Live Oak, 6 in. in Diameter.

LARGE TREES SAVE YEARS FOR OWNERS

In planting Shade Trees from Four inch Caliper and larger, it means that the Owner saves from five to fifteen years in having large Specimen Trees. A Tree measuring from four inches in diameter and up planted will put on under normal care, three to four feet of new growth during the coming Summer growing Season; and by the end of the Second season will be a wide spreading Shade Tree.

To be able to use large Specimens on the lawn where Trees are needed for background and Shade, is one of the most outstanding assets of the Landscape Development. Large trees create the finishing touch of the large Estate, as well as the small home grounds.

LIVE OAKS ARE EVERLASTING

The Shade Tree of the South, nothing can compare to the MAJESTY of the OAKS — because of their LONGEVITY, everlasting beauty and RAPID GROWTH, the Oaks are now preferred to all other Shade trees.

HOW OLD ARE LIVE OAKS?

An article written by Mr. E. L. Stephens on this subject which appeared in the "American Forest", a magazine of the American Forestry Association of Washington, D. C., outlines the story of approximately how old Live Oaks live to be.

In this article Mr. Stephens refers to Live Oak trees that measure 18', 22', 27' and even to one specimen tree that measures 34' in circumference. These large, spreading Live Oaks referred to are found in front of Col. Boyd's residence on the old University campus in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. However, the largest tree located to date is found six miles from Breaux Bridge west of the Teche and which is named the "Arnaud Robert Live Oak tree." This tree is 87' high and has a trunk diameter of 33' and 5" with a spread of the top branches of 135'. This tree, according to Mr. Stephens' article is, from all research made, the largest Live Oak tree in existence.

Authorities on Live Oaks claim that these large Live Oaks throughout the southern states range anywhere from 200 to 1,200 years old. The great British botanist, Hendy John Elwes, F. R. S., estimates that the largest existing trees in the South are fully 1,000 to 1,200 years old.

How old a large individual Live Oak may be when it is so placed that the probability is in favor of its having been transplanted by nature rather than by man is, of course, a matter of conjecture. Based upon measurements of many of the largest Live Oaks in the South and upon exhaustive inquiries, it has finally been concluded that under ordinary conditions a Live Oak tree measuring 17' in circumference at a distance of 4' above the ground is approximately 100 years old. This estimate is made based on native trees and with nominal amount of care and cultivation.

One interesting story is told as to the general estimate on the life of a tree, "The Crow Live Oak Trees" which were planted in Lafayette, Louisiana, from the acorn now measure on the average 13' 6" in circumference at a point 4' above the ground. These Oaks were planted by the late Basil C. Crow on his old home place in 1856. The place is now known as the Elmhurst Addition and these trees would now be 84 years old, which is a fair average for trees measuring 13½' in circumference.

Similar stories bear out the general average of gowth of the native Live Oak trees, the estimates therefore are based on accurate dates and verified information but to say the least, we can come to the favorable conclusion that Live Oak trees are at least a long-lived tree. It is safely concluded that Live Oaks grow to be 1,000 years old in spite of the fact that few if any of that age and corresponding size are available today.

It is known that up to a comparatively recent time old Live Oak trees had an immense money value on account of their use for the building of ships for the world's navies. Where there are few large spreading trees still in existence, such as the Jefferson Island Oak, it is doubtless because of their inaccessibility, being placed beyond the ruthless hand of the ship-builders.

News By Associated Press From Rouen, France, April 9, 1940.

HUGE OLD OAK HONORED BY FRENCH CHURCH RITE

The 1,200th anniversary of a great Live Oak tree will be celebrated in the village of Allou-Bellechesse on July 2nd when 40 children will receive their first communions in two chapels within its trunk.

One of the two chapels contains a statue of the Virgin Mary presented by the Empress Eugenie. The second chapel, over the first, is reached by an exterior stairway.

SOCIETY OF LIVE OAK TREES

"Members Being Trees Only"

In southern Louisiana Dr. E. L. Stephens was instrumental in founding a Society of Live Oaks—all members being trees with the one exception of Dr. Stephens, who is the only human member of this Association.

Appreciating the real value and beauty of the Evergreen Live Oak Trees to the South, Dr. Stephens founded this Society in recognition of the 125 located Historical Trees.

Qualification for membership in this Association specifies that a tree has to be "at least **100 years old**" and is registered by an Attorney-in-fact, who supervises the member's guidance. Naturally the trees attend no meetings but they do pay dues, the dues being 25 acorns each on New Year's Day. These acorns produce young trees, which are distributed by the Junior League from a central location for beautification of the state highways. Each tree has a decided history and a name, such as "Lorna Doone" and "John Ruskin".

Brother Oak "Locke Breaux" is President of this society, being the largest and the oldest member of the group with a 35' girth. The member "Arnaud Robert" serves as Vice-President, with a close measurement of 33' in girth. Each tree is required to have a guardian with power-of-attorney who protects it from "whitewash and Bill posters."

The progress of this Society since its original organization has been far reaching and especially under the direction of the Louisiana Conservation Department and those interested in the protection and preservation of these age-old trees.

The Live Oak Association prepared and adopted a constitution and by-laws which represents an effort to perpetuate their organization. Perhaps the Preamble to the Constitution will verify their efforts and it is repeated as follows:

"Whereas the Live Oak is one of God's creatures that has been keeping quiet for a long time, just standing there contemplating the situation without having very much to say, but only increasing in size, beauty, strength, and firmness, day by day, without getting the attention and appreciation that it merits from its anthropomorphic fellow-mortals; and

"Whereas it has been found that organization and publication are a good means of promoting influence and service in the world; therefore

"This Constitution for an universal association of Live Oaks is hereby ordained and established."

WE SALUTE YOU AS LIVE OAK PLANTERS!

Ex-Governor of Texas once said "Do a good deed today for the Coming Generation to remember you by—Plant a Tree. You may not enjoy its shade and comfort, but think what it will mean to the coming generation?"

To a part of the list we have furnished Live Oak Trees for planting, we salute as follows:

Frank M. Yount Estate, Beaumont	276 Trees
S. M. U. Campus, Dallas	137 Trees
Texas State College for Women, Denton	650 Trees
Texas State Highways in Landscaping	1160 Trees
Louisiana State Highways in Landscaping	1420 Trees
Literary Club of Port Arthur, Texas	76 Trees
Park Department of Port Arthur, Texas	340 Trees
University of Texas, Austin	110 Trees
Cemetery Planting of Waco, Texas	210 Trees
Country Club Estates, Wichita Falls, Texas	460 Trees
Benevidas and San Diego Parks of Texas	200 Trees
Wm. S. Bonner Estate, Houston	36 Trees
J. S. Stafford Estate, Houston	42 Trees
U. S. Public Health Service Hospital, Ft. Worth	296 Trees
Kempner Estates, Galveston & Plantersville, Texas	94 Trees

And others too numerous to mention in this limited space, which are equally as important as those above.

A Live Oak Tree in Our Home Grounds

RESULTS of LIVE OAK TREES PLANTED

A CARLOAD A YEAR FOR TEN YEARS

TEXAS STATE COLLEGE FOR WOMEN
Denton, Texas

Mr. Walter C. Griffing,
The Griffing Nurseries
Beaumont, Texas

November 12, 1940

Dear Mr. Griffing:

It is a pleasure to attach the College's Order for 65 Spanish Type Live Oaks (Quercus Virginiana) to cover this year's shipment as provided for in the Contract between the College and your firm, dated January 6, **1931.**

Last year you were so kind as to send us an unusually fine shipment of Live Oaks, ranging from 9 to 12 ft. high, measuring around 3 inches in diameter. Such high-headed Trees are exactly what we have been looking for, and we hope that you will be able to send us similar trees this year.

I am sorry that this is the last installment of Trees under the Contract mentioned above, but I hope that we shall continue to patronize your firm, because we have found that you always provided us with the highest quality of Plant material.

Please arrange to ship this order so as to reach us on or about December 1, 1940.

With kindest personal regards, I am

Sincerely yours,
FRED W. WESTCOURT, Director
Dept. of Rural Arts.

EVERGREEN LIVE OAK TREES PLANTED ON S. M. U. CAMPUS OF DALLAS, TEXAS

Quoting from Dr. A. D. Schuessler, Chairman of the Campus Beautification Committee of S. M. U., he comments as follows:

"Our, 'One Mile of Live Oaks' on the S. M. U. Campus is now a reality. We are very happy that the Trees are here, and in the ground. The Trees are really making a fine show in spite of the fact that they have no leaves and the Hackberries have. But, people will soon find out that the Live Oaks will also have leaves. The Trees arrived in good condition.

We received your Invoice for the 128 Trees Selected. Perhaps you remember that we selected one Tree for Dallas Hall in the block where we selected other Trees. The Tree is a beautiful one, and we planted it by the Dallas Hall, and we will call it the "W. C. Griffing Tree".

The Dallas News had the following editorial commending Dr. Schuessler about his efforts in the Landscape and beautification of the Campus by the planting of this mile of Specimen Live Oaks as follows:

"The Planting of 125 Live Oak Trees on Bishop Boulevard this year will carry forward the excellent progress already made in Landscaping the campus of S. M. U. and ultimately will give Dallas Hall one of the most beautiful approaches to be found in the whole Southwest.

The Live Oaks being planted this year will be large ones, and will add much to the attractiveness of the campus, present and future. The Live Oak is one of the most stately Trees of Texas, and is well adapted to soil and climatic condition here."

LOCAL SCHOOL PLANTING TO LIVE OAKS

In 1932, the following article appeared in the School paper of Beaumont High with reference to the planting of Live Oaks on the Campus:

"The campus of Beaumont High School is being 'dressed up' again this week for the coming Spring and Summer days ahead.

A quantity of Evergreen Live Oaks (Quercus virginiana) are being planted around the grounds so as to furnish the necessary shades during the 'good ole Summer time'.

Last week the school contracted for the planting of 120 Trees which is now in progress and will be fully completed in another week's time. The work is being done by the Griffing Nurseries.

No School campus is complete or finished until the Shade trees are set and growing, and in the Southland where Evergreens are plentiful it is but fitting that the Landscape should be made complete with lovely Live Oaks.

The Live Oak has the longest life of any other Shade Tree, and the older it gets the stronger and more beautiful it grows. Its greenness during the wintry days, while barren (deciduous) trees reflect the bleakness, adds cheer, hope and happiness to its surroundings."

• • •

These are but a few of the reports from Schools, Universities, Parks, and Private people who have successfully planted Live Oak Trees and already enjoying the beauty of their trees planted just a few short years ago.

LIVE OAK BULLETIN—
No. 111

Compliments of . . .
GRIFFING NURSERIES
Beaumont, Texas

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